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MODERN BOY

No. 20

JULY 2nd, 1938

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2^D

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STORIES

**HURRICANE
SALVAGE!**

*Thrilling King of the Islands
Story*

By CHARLES HAMILTON

Nick Forrest, Boy Speed King, in

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By CLIFFORD CAMERON

**GUNNING FOR
FOSSY** *Wild West Fun
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HURRICANE SALVAGE!

Racing for the Reef

DAGO feller!" said Koko.

The boatswain of the Dawn did not think much of "dagoes." And the one who stood on the beach of Lololo, his eyes fixed on the ketch anchored in the lagoon, did not

Why had the three dagoes stolen the Dawn's boat . . . put out to sea? It was a mystery to King of the Islands until he sighted the drifting derelict

By CHARLES HAMILTON

look a favourable specimen.

He was a burly man, black-eyed, black-haired, black-bearded, with a swarthy Italian face, clad in tattered calico trousers, a ragged shirt, and a big grass-hat. He looked like a beach-comber, and one in hard luck.

Ken King and his mate, Kit Hudson, looked round as Koko spoke, followed his glance. The skipper and mate of the Dawn were surprised to see a man on Lololo. It was so far as they knew, an uninhabited island.

Ken King, the boy trader known as King of the Islands, had put into the lagoon for shelter. For a night and a morning, the Pacific had been storm-tossed. Round the high outer reef, great waves had roared and thundered, while the ketch lay snugly at anchor within. The hurricane had blown itself out, but there was still a heavy swell on the sea, and Ken King did not intend to pull out till the following morning. Not for a moment had he expected to see any man, white or brown, on Lololo, and he looked curiously at the tattered figure that had emerged from the palms.

"A beachcomber—here?" said Kit Hudson.

"Shipwrecked, perhaps," said Ken.

"Or—"

"Or marooned!" said the mate of the Dawn, with a shrug of the shoulders. He looks the kind of swab a skipper might be glad to get rid of.

"More feller stop," said Koko.

"Lololo seems to have become populated all of a sudden," exclaimed Hudson.

Two more tattered figures came out of the palms. Both, like the first, were dagoes, swarthy and black-haired. They joined the first man, and all three stood staring towards the ketch, talking and gesticulating. Then the first man ran down the beach, plunged into the water, and started swimming towards the Dawn. The other two stood and watched him.

Ken King did not like the looks of any of the three, but if they were shipwrecked seamen, he could not refuse them a passage on his ketch from that lonely island. Even if they had, as he more than half-suspected, been marooned, he did not feel that he could leave them there. But he did not like the idea of those three swarthy swabs on his ketch.

The Dawn was anchored a good cable's length from the beach. The swimmer came out with swift strokes, and was very soon under the rail. At a sign from Ken, the boatswain gave him a helping hand aboard, and he dropped lightly on the deck. He stepped towards Ken and saluted.

"Signor King of the Islands!" he said. "I knew your ship at once, signor, when I saw it."

"Ay, ay!" answered Ken. "Who are you, and how did you get on Lololo?"

"Giuseppe Giro, signor, at your service," answered the Italian seaman. "It is weeks, signor, since we were wrecked here, my friends and I, but I have not come to ask for a passage on your ship."

"Oh!" said Ken, rather relieved to hear it. "What do you want, then?"

"To ask a favour, signor, which you will grant in your kindness of heart," said Giro. "Will you permit me to use your boat, for one hour, while you lie at anchor here?"

"The whaleboat!" said Ken, in astonishment.

"Si, signor. We have no boat—not even a canoe—nothing! It is to make a trip round the island, signor, to fetch one of our friends who is hurt and cannot walk. He fell, signor, and hurt his leg, on the other side of Lololo. It is on this side that we live, signor, in a hut under the palms. To carry him across the island, that is difficult, and he is in great pain. Then I see your ship, and I say to Beppo and Felipe, this English signor will let us use his boat, for so short a time, to bring our poor friend round the island."

King of the Islands nodded at once.

"Certainly you may use the boat," he said, "and I will send a couple of Kanakas in it, to help you."

"Oh, that is not needed, signor!" said Giro quickly. "If you will but lend the boat, it is all that I ask. My friends and I, we will row—and in one hour or less, signor, I will return your boat, with a thousand thanks!"

He turned, and waved a dusky hand at the two men on the beach. Immediately, they waded out into the lagoon and swam off towards the Dawn.

"Lower the whaleboat!" directed Ken. The Hiva-Oa boys ran to swing the whaleboat down from the davits. Kit Hudson touched King of the Islands on the elbow.

"Go easy, old man," he murmured. "I don't trust Mister Giuseppe Giro a whole lot, on his looks. I'd send a man in the boat."

"I mean to!" answered Ken. "It sounds square enough, but if they're thinking of pinching our boat, we don't want the trouble of running them down before we pull out, Koko!"

"Yessar!"

"You will go in the boat!"

"Yessar!" said Koko, with emphasis. "Me keep eye belong me, sar, plenty too much open."

Koko dropped into the boat, and Giuseppe Giro gave him a look. Then he looked round at King of the Islands. But he did not speak. Ken was sending a man in the boat, whether Giuseppe Giro waded him or not; and no doubt the quick-witted Italian understood that much.

The other two dagoes, Beppo and Felipe, as Giro had named them, swiftly reached the Dawn. They clambered into the whaleboat, shook the water from their tattered garments, and took up the oars at once.

Giuseppe slipped down nimbly into the whaleboat, and Koko pushed off, then sat down to steer while the Italians pulled.

Skipper and mate and crew of the Dawn followed it with their eyes. Lololo was a small island—a spot of green in the centre of the lagoon which surrounded it, and surrounded in its turn by the outer reef, beyond which the Pacific rolled and boomed. It was no more than an hour's pull round to the other side of Lololo and back again to the Dawn's anchorage. The lagoon was calm, rough as the sea was outside the barrier reef—only in one spot, where the circle was broken, the water tossed in the reef passage.

There was a lingering doubt and suspicion in Kit Hudson's face, and Ken glanced at him with a smile.

"You don't believe that dago, Kit?" he asked.

"No!" grunted Hudson. "I don't!"

"But why should he have lied?" said Ken. "I've no doubt they'd like to get

hold of a boat—it would be useful enough to them—but they must know that we shouldn't sail without it; they could only cause us delay till we got it back."

Hudson nodded slowly.

"That's so," he admitted. "But that greasy dago was lying. I don't believe he's got a damaged shipmate on the other side of Lololo, and if they're not trying to pinch our boat, I don't know what their game is."

"Well, they won't pinch the boat, with Koko on board," said Ken, smiling. "And if they did, they couldn't keep it from us. I don't see why the man should have swum out to tell us a string of lies for nothing."

"I don't, either! But—"

"My sainted Sam!" yelled King of the Islands, interrupting Hudson. Giuseppe Giro had dropped his hat, which he had kept on his black-haired head during his swim out to the Dawn, and stooped as if to pick it up. But what he picked up were the bare, brown ankles of Koko. And so suddenly was it done, that the bo'sun was tipped over the gunwale before he knew what was happening!

Koko was in no danger; he could swim like a fish. But the moment he was clear of the boat, the dagoes turned its nose in the direction of the reef passage and rowed with desperate speed.

"We've Been Fooled!"

SUFFERING cats!" gasped Kit Hudson.

There was a cackle of surprise and excitement from the native crew on the Dawn. Lompo and Lifu, Tomoo and Kolulo, and Danny, the cooky, all exclaimed together, as they stared after the fleeing boat. Ken's eyes glinted with anger. Yet he was more astonished than angry.

He had been fooled. Hudson was right. There was no injured man on the other side of Lololo to be brought round in the boat—the dagoes were making for the open sea. And they had pitched Koko out of the boat, to get rid of him for some unknown purpose of their own. But what purpose?

It was impossible to suspect that they meant to flee from the island in the

whaleboat without food or water. Neither, if they had had any such frantic idea, was success possible—for the Dawn had only to get sail up and pursue, and run the fugitives down on the sea. What it all meant was beyond guessing.

But whatever it meant, King of the Islands was not the man to be fooled and flouted by a crew of dagoes. He put his hands to his mouth and shouted after the boat:

"Bring back that boat, you scum, or I'll fire on you!"

His shout, borne on the keen wind that blew across the lagoon, must have reached the whaleboat, distant as it already was. But it was not heeded by the dago crew. They pulled as if for their lives, rapidly approaching the break in the barrier reef, where the water creamed and tossed among the ridges and teeth of the coral.

Ken's eyes flashed.

"Lompo! My rifle!" he snapped. Lompo ran up with the Winchester. King of the Islands levelled it across the teak rail. Then he shouted a last warning.

The boat flew on. Ken pulled the trigger, and the bullet whistled over the heads of the rowers. It went close enough for them to feel the wind of it, but it produced no effect. Unheeding, they pulled on, and the boat was almost nosing into the reef by that time.

"By gum!" breathed Hudson. "What on earth is their game? We shall have to get the hook up and go after them, Ken!"

"It beats me! I've half a mind to pitch lead right into them!" said Ken savagely. He fired again, and the grass-hat twirled on the dark mop of Giro's head. The Italian gave a start, but he did not cease to pull for a second.

Angry as he was, King of the Islands could not bring himself to shoot down the swarthy rascals. There was no danger of actually losing the whaleboat—it was only a question of taking the trouble to pursue the dagoes. He would not shed blood to save that trouble. He dropped the rifle butt to the deck.

Tomoo threw a rope to Koko. The boatswain had swum back to the Dawn, and he clambered on board, drenched and dripping, his dark eyes gleaming anger from his brown face.

"That bad feller dago make this feller stop along lagoon," he gasped. "Me like goey along that feller, sar, along likk that feller plenty too much, along lawyer-cane."

"We shall have to pull out after them, Ken, or lose the boat!" said Hudson.

Ken nodded. His eyes fixed on the whaleboat, now in the passage of the



As the Dawn surged up, Giuseppe threw himself from the whaleboat, clambering up the wreckage to the schooner's deck.

HURRICANE SALVAGE!

reef, where the water was rough from the swell of the open sea. Giuseppe, Beppo, and Felipe were pulling hard for the Pacific, and in a minute or two more they would be gone from sight. The barrier reef was high, shutting off the view of the open sea beyond; and once the boat was past the rugged masses of high-piled coral, it would be barred from view from the lagoon. But what the three dagoes were pulling out to sea for could not be guessed. Outside the barrier reef was the rolling Pacific, still swelling heavily from the late hurricane—dangerous water for an open boat. It was absolutely impossible to guess the meaning of this amazing trick.

And then all of a sudden the shipmates of the Dawn knew!
 "A derelict!" breathed Ken.
 All round the lagoon, the high barrier reef shut off the sea from sight—save in the one spot where the reef passage opened. And across the narrow strip of sea that could be seen through the reef passage a ship drifted, rolling helplessly on the rough water. The masts were gone, and over the port side hung a tangle of dismantled spars and rigging. Not a man was to be seen on the deck, and there was no sign of a boat!

It was a deserted ship, evidently abandoned by its crew, in the belief that it was going down. But it had lived through the hurricane that had driven the Dawn to shelter, and still floated.

Up to that moment the crew of the Dawn had seen nothing of it. Had the masts been still standing, the tops would have been visible over the barrier reef. But the masts were gone, and the dismantled schooner had drifted unseen—till it drifted past the reef passage, and thus came into view from the lagoon within.

But though it had not been seen from the Dawn, it was evident, now, that it had been seen by the dagoes—perhaps from a hill or a treetop. All was clear now—and Giro's lying tale was explained. The dagoes wanted the boat to pull out to the drifting derelict, for the first man on board a derelict claimed salvage! With cool impudence, Giro had deceived King of the Islands with a lying tale to get hold of the Dawn's boat, and be the first man on board.

No wonder that he had been in a haste—for from the direction of the schooner's drift, it was sure to pass the opening of the reef passage sooner or later, and thus come in sight of the anchored ketch. And then, if he was too late, his game would have been up. Salvage was to the first comer, and King of the Islands would not have lost time, after seeing how matters stood.

"A derelict!" repeated King of the Islands. He stared fixedly at the dismantled schooner, drifting helplessly on the swell of the Pacific, far beyond the reef. "So that was it!"

That was it! Hudson grinned. "I knew there was something—we've been fooled. If we hadn't lent that dago our boat, that would be our salvage, Ken."

Ken set his lips.
 "We've been fooled—but we're not beaten yet!" he said. "It's a long pull, and the sea's rough. The dago's got a start on us, Kit, with his lies—but he hasn't won the race! Up hook!"

"What-ho!" said Hudson.
 Immediately all was stirring haste on board the Dawn.

The anchor swung up from the coral, the boys shook out sail. King of the Islands had intended to remain at anchor for the night, and pull out at sunrise—but the sight of the derelict changed all that.

The salvage of the schooner was likely to show more profit than drumming for copra among the islands, and this was a chance not to be lost. Giuseppe had obtained possession of a boat, but he had not, as Ken said, won the race yet!

In matters of salvage it was first come first served! Once under sail, and outside the reef, there was a healthy chance of the swift ketch beating the whaleboat. And if King of the Islands was first on board the schooner, the salvage was his. It was his own good nature, and the dago's lying, that had put a rival in his way—but he was going to beat that rival in the race, if he could!

The Dawn glided down to the passage in the barrier reef. Threading the coral passage in haste would have been at the risk of piling up the Dawn—and King of the Islands had to con the ketch carefully through the teeth of the jagged coral. But once outside, with the wind astern, the ketch would fly like a sea-bird—and there was still a long pull ahead of the dagoes in the whaleboat. The race was not won or lost yet!

"Me savvy, Koko?" he said.
 "You tinkee, sar!" said Koko. "This feller tinkee that feller schooner feller Grampus, belong Lukwe, sar."
 "Black Furley's schooner!" exclaimed Kit Hudson.
 Ken stared fixedly at the drifting derelict. He nodded.
 "Koko's right," he said. "It's the Grampus! Black Furley of Lukwe has had bad luck, Kit."
 "As good as he deserves!" grunted the mate of the Dawn.
 Ken smiled.
 "Jim Furley's a tough customer," he said. "They're all tough on Lukwe, and Furley's the toughest of the lot, except Dandy Peter. But I'm sorry for any skipper to be knocked out like this."
 Kit Hudson nodded assent to that. What was salvage and a handsome prize to the first man to set foot on the Grampus was deadly disaster to the skipper who had lost his ship. Jim Furley of Lukwe was an owner-skipper, like King of the Islands—though little like him in other respects. Of all the rough crew on the lawless island of Lukwe, Jim Furley was one of the roughest and the toughest—smuggler, pearl-poacher, nigger-stealer, and many other things. The shipmates of the Dawn had had trouble with the black-bearded ruffian of Lukwe more than once, but that did not prevent them from sparing him a spot of sympathy now.
 Black Furley had had luck—probably of a more or less questionable nature—and set up a schooner with a native crew to trade among the islands, in the place of the dingy old lugger he had once sailed. Likely enough, all he had was invested in the Grampus—and this was the end of his venture—the schooner a deserted and drifting derelict, Furley himself shipwrecked, perhaps at the bottom of the Pacific. It was clear that the crew of the Grampus had gone in the boats—there was not a boat to be seen on the schooner. Furley must have supposed that his hooker was going down when he left her; but she still floated—a prize for salvage-hunters!

Now that he knew that the derelict was Furley's ship, Ken was puzzled. Jim Furley was not the man to leave his ship—all he had in the world—so long as there was a chance of keeping her afloat. And that there had been a chance was proved by the fact that, after the storm had blown itself out, she still floated.
 "Trouble with the native crew," said Kit, reading the boy trader's thoughts. "Furley had a heavy hand with niggers—but you can't punch a man out of a panic. The crew panicked, took the bit between their teeth, and he had to go."
 "I suppose that would be it," assented Ken. "When the masts went, they reckoned the packet was going, and they cleared."
 "Anyhow, she's derelict now."
 "Ay, ay, no doubt about that! If there was a living man on board, he would be on deck, signalling for help."
 "And he'd need it with that crew of dagoes bearing down on him," said Hudson, with a grin. "Giro is after salvage, but I'll bet he wouldn't let much stand in his way if he found a man left on board. I'd be willing to bet that he was marooned on Lololo for being too handy with his knife."
 "More than likely," agreed Ken.
 "We're gaining fast," said Hudson.
 "But—"
 "But—"
 Ken watched, in doubt. The Dawn was overhauling the boat hand over fist. Desperately, almost madly, the three dagoes strained at the oars, their swarthy faces glaring back at the Dawn as they pulled, the sweat running down their dusky cheeks. But the ketch was swooping after them like an albatross. Their only chance was that they were now near the drifting schooner, and might reach it before the ketch, swift as it was, passed them in the race.
 Ken's face was fierce and eager. He would have been keen in any case, in a race for salvage; but the trick Giro had played on him made him doubly keen to beat the dago. He was hopeful, but he was in doubt as the Dawn rushed on, under her booming canvas, her sharp prow cleaving the Pacific rollers like a knife, a long white wake streaming behind her. She sailed at least ten fathoms to the whaleboat's one, fiercely as the dagoes strained at the oars, overhauling the swarthy trio faster and faster till at length a biscuit could have been tossed from the ketch to the whaleboat.
 One more minute, and the tall sails of the Dawn would have swept onward,

at the mercy of the sea, pitching and tossing wildly, the rudder swinging and banging. Nearer was the whaleboat, the three dagoes panting and straining at the oars, putting every ounce of strength into the pull now that they saw the Dawn in pursuit, and knew that King of the Islands was their rival for salvage.

Ken glared round at Koko as he spoke. The boy trader never forgot a craft he had once seen; but the dismantled schooner was hardly in a recognizable state.

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 One more minute, and the tall sails of the Dawn would have swept onward,

leaving the whaleboat rocking beaten in the rear. Had Giuseppe and his crew had a dozen more fathoms to pull, they would have been beaten to the wide.

But even as the ketch towered over the stern of the whaleboat, the boat's nose crashed into the top-hammer floating beside the dismantled schooner—a mass of broken masts, spars, torn canvas, and tangled ropes.

The dagoes drew in the oars, and held on to the wreckage. The whaleboat rocked and danced on the heavy sea, wrecked rigging of the schooner wallowing round her. Giuseppe, with the activity of a cat, threw himself from the boat, clatching at the wreckage, and clambered over it to the schooner's side—and, drenched, dripping, panting, half-drowned, rolled on board.

Ken made a sign to Koko at the helm. The ketch bore away, almost grazing the floating wreckage that pounded the schooner's side.

Ken shut his teeth hard. Hudson gave an angry grunt. On the cluttered deck of the schooner, Giuseppe Giro leaped to his feet, and his black eyes blazed triumph and defiance at the ketch. He shouted, but his words were lost in the wind.

"They win!" said King of the Islands. "Our own fault!" grunted the mate of the Dawn. "I knew that dago was lying, and had something up his sleeve—"

"We couldn't guess what till we saw the derelict, old man," said Ken. "It's his luck, and ours is out! It was a near thing enough."
 Little white master go along feller schooner?" asked Koko. "Make that feller dago no stop along ship belong Black Furley!"

Ken laughed, and shook his head. He could not help feeling sore, for it was by trickery that Giuseppe had won to the salvage. But the law of the sea was the law of the sea. There were plenty of South Sea skippers who would have stood on little ceremony in dealing with an outcast crew of castaway dagoes. But King of the Islands was not one of them. Giuseppe Giro was first man on board the derelict; it was his salvage. And it was not Ken's way to do any man wrong.

"It's the dago's salvage, Koko!" he said. "That feller dago stop along Grampus!"
 Koko gave an angry snort.
 "That feller make this feller Koko stop along lagoon," he grunted. "Me like plenty too much kill that feller along lawyer-cane."

Giuseppe Giro was grinning over the schooner's rail. He had won the race, and the fact that he had tricked the English skipper into lending him the means to do so probably added to his satisfaction. He shouted, in his own tongue, to his companions, and they clambered over the wreckage and joined him on the schooner's deck.

The whaleboat, left with its painter tied to the wreckage, bobbed on the rough water. Giuseppe waved a greasy, dusky hand to the ketch and pointed to the boat. He shouted again, and this time his voice came to the shipmates of the Dawn.

"You may have your boat—I have my ship! Many, many thanks, signor!"
 His look and tone were full of mockery, and his two companions grinned by his side. King of the Islands did not deign to answer. He had to recover the boat, which he could have kicked himself for lending to the grinning dago. It was no easy matter to draw near the drifting derelict in the rough sea, and getting the whaleboat in meant time and trouble—and Ken gave his attention to that, and took no further notice of the dagoes. And Giuseppe Giro, still grinning, left his two companions on deck, watching the ketch, while he went below to examine his prize.

He did not know Black Furley by sight. But he knew that this must be the skipper of the drifting schooner.

Up to that moment, not a doubt had crossed his mind, any more than it had crossed Ken King's, that the schooner was deserted—a derelict! The crew had deserted her in the boats, and it seemed that the after-guard had gone with the crew—a living man on board would have

been on deck on the watch for help—would, at least, have secured the helm. But as he stared at the black-bearded man Giuseppe understood. Furley's bronzed face was a chalky hue, its pallor spotted with half-dried blood that oozed from under his stubby hair. He had been beaten senseless when the crew fled in the belief that the ship was sinking. Black Furley, perhaps, had known better than he had failed to quell the panic; authority had been broken down by terror, and they had knocked him out and left him.

Giuseppe understood—and his teeth showed in a snarl like a savage dog's.
 He had tricked Ken King, had won the race to the derelict—and it was no derelict; there was no salvage! It had all gone for nothing, with a living man on board the schooner—if the man lived! Rigging a jury-mast, sailing the schooner to the nearest white man's port, claiming the salvage—all was washed out now, with the captain alive on board the Grampus! Giuseppe Giro, who had been marooned with his comrades on Lololo for stabbing a man in a forecaste shindy, was not likely to hesitate. His swarthy hand crept to the knife at the back of his belt, as he stood and stared at the skipper of the Grampus.

The Lukwe skipper had lain senseless since the black crew had fled, and even yet he was only beginning to recover. Probably it was the sound of footsteps on the deck above that had at last recalled him to himself—and now he was slowly and painfully struggling to his feet.

For a long, long moment Giuseppe stood staring the ferocity of a wild beast in his swarthy face. Then, with a cat-like tread, he moved towards the struggling man.

The Dawn was still in the offing and if King of the Islands learned, if he even suspected that a living man was on the schooner, he was not likely to leave him at the mercy of a gang of desperadoes. Giuseppe dared not let the man on the Grampus show his face out the Dawn should fall on it. He knew the reputation of King of the Islands—the boy trader was the man to stand by friend or foe in such a pass. No man on the Dawn—no man in the Pacific—was to know that Giuseppe had found a living man on the derelict.

Black Furley gave a deep groan as he heaved himself to his feet. His bruised head ached horribly. Since consciousness had begun to return, he had lain in a torpor, till the sounds above had aroused him. But as he dragged himself up, his head was aching, his senses almost spinning, and he grimaced with the spasm of pain that shot through his skull. But he knew that there were men on deck—whether his own crew or not, he did not know, for all was blank to him since the blacks had struck him down and left him stunned. His last recollection was a rain of mad blows that had sent him stumbling headlong down the companion to sprawl senseless on the cabin floor. Gripping the bunk, he dragged himself up. As he did so he became aware of the Italian.

His haggard eyes turned on the swarthy, savage face, the half-drawn knife, as the dago came at him. That sudden shock finished pulling Jim Furley together. His wild life had made him quick on the uptake. He saw the Italian—and, within a moment, the desperado was at him, his knife out. But in that moment the Lukwe skipper flung himself out of the dago's way, and the slash of the knife missed him by a foot.

"By hokey!" panted Furley.
 Giuseppe turned on him like a tiger. The skipper of the Grampus staggered against a bulkhead, gasping with the pain in his aching head, unarmed—with the swarthy desperado springing at him like a cat. But Furley had been through many a rough house on wild Pacific beaches, and a dago with a knife was no new experience for him. His foot shot up and a heavy sea-boot crashed in the pit of the dago's stomach.

Giuseppe's slashing knife tore a deep gash in the sea-boot as he staggered, gasping and howling with pain.
 "You scum!" panted Black Furley. He advanced on Giuseppe, smashing out with his brazen fist. Giuseppe's knife went flying across the cabin, and the dago dodged and twisted to escape the fierce blows. He was almost winded by the kick from the heavy sea-boot, and he gasped and groaned for breath. Had the burly Lukwe skipper been in anything like his normal state the dago would have been knocked-out in a very few moments. But the exertion brought so terrible a pang of pain through his bruised head that Jim Furley reeled, and staggered against the bunk, half-fainting.

Giuseppe bolted up the ladder, and there came a babble of excited voices in a foreign tongue.
 Jim Furley made a herculean effort to pull himself together, and drove back the deadly faintness that almost overcame him. He had to fight for his life.

(Continued on page 19)

cluttered, everything that could move having shifted its moorings while the Grampus was tossing in the storm. Amid the clutter, cockroaches were crawling—Black Furley's was not a clean ship. But what fixed Giuseppe's startled eyes as he came out of the companion was the burly form clambering painfully up, with a grip on the edge of the bunk.

"Il capitano!" breathed Giuseppe.
 He did not know Black Furley by sight. But he knew that this must be the skipper of the drifting schooner.

Up to that moment, not a doubt had crossed his mind, any more than it had crossed Ken King's, that the schooner was deserted—a derelict! The crew had deserted her in the boats, and it seemed that the after-guard had gone with the crew—a living man on board would have

been on deck on the watch for help—would, at least, have secured the helm. But as he stared at the black-bearded man Giuseppe understood. Furley's bronzed face was a chalky hue, its pallor spotted with half-dried blood that oozed from under his stubby hair. He had been beaten senseless when the crew fled in the belief that the ship was sinking. Black Furley, perhaps, had known better than he had failed to quell the panic; authority had been broken down by terror, and they had knocked him out and left him.

Giuseppe understood—and his teeth showed in a snarl like a savage dog's.
 He had tricked Ken King, had won the race to the derelict—and it was no derelict; there was no salvage! It had all gone for nothing, with a living man on board the schooner—if the man lived! Rigging a jury-mast, sailing the schooner to the nearest white man's port, claiming the salvage—all was washed out now, with the captain alive on board the Grampus! Giuseppe Giro, who had been marooned with his comrades on Lololo for stabbing a man in a forecaste shindy, was not likely to hesitate. His swarthy hand crept to the knife at the back of his belt, as he stood and stared at the skipper of the Grampus.

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Beaten by Inches
 "Me savvy, Koko?" he said.
 "You tinkee, sar!" said Koko. "This feller tinkee that feller schooner feller Grampus, belong Lukwe, sar."
 "Black Furley's schooner!" exclaimed Kit Hudson.
 Ken stared fixedly at the drifting derelict. He nodded.
 "Koko's right," he said. "It's the Grampus! Black Furley of Lukwe has had bad luck, Kit."
 "As good as he deserves!" grunted the mate of the Dawn.
 Ken smiled.
 "Jim Furley's a tough customer," he said. "They're all tough on Lukwe, and Furley's the toughest of the lot, except Dandy Peter. But I'm sorry for any skipper to be knocked out like this."
 Kit Hudson nodded assent to that. What was salvage and a handsome prize to the first man to set foot on the Grampus was deadly disaster to the skipper who had lost his ship. Jim Furley of Lukwe was an owner-skipper, like King of the Islands—though little like him in other respects. Of all the rough crew on the lawless island of Lukwe, Jim Furley was one of the roughest and the toughest—smuggler, pearl-poacher, nigger-stealer, and many other things. The shipmates of the Dawn had had trouble with the black-bearded ruffian of Lukwe more than once, but that did not prevent them from sparing him a spot of sympathy now.
 Black Furley had had luck—probably of a more or less questionable nature—and set up a schooner with a native crew to trade among the islands, in the place of the dingy old lugger he had once sailed. Likely enough, all he had was invested in the Grampus—and this was the end of his venture—the schooner a deserted and drifting derelict, Furley himself shipwrecked, perhaps at the bottom of the Pacific. It was clear that the crew of the Grampus had gone in the boats—there was not a boat to be seen on the schooner. Furley must have supposed that his hooker was going down when he left her; but she still floated—a prize for salvage-hunters!

Now that he knew that the derelict was Furley's ship, Ken was puzzled. Jim Furley was not the man to leave his ship—all he had in the world—so long as there was a chance of keeping her afloat. And that there had been a chance was proved by the fact that, after the storm had blown itself out, she still floated.

"Trouble with the native crew," said Kit, reading the boy trader's thoughts. "Furley had a heavy hand with niggers—but you can't punch a man out of a panic. The crew panicked, took the bit between their teeth, and he had to go."
 "I suppose that would be it," assented Ken. "When the masts went, they reckoned the packet was going, and they cleared."
 "Anyhow, she's derelict now."
 "Ay, ay, no doubt about that! If there was a living man on board, he would be on deck, signalling for help."
 "And he'd need it with that crew of dagoes bearing down on him," said Hudson, with a grin. "Giro is after salvage, but I'll bet he wouldn't let much stand in his way if he found a man left on board. I'd be willing to bet that he was marooned on Lololo for being too handy with his knife."
 "More than likely," agreed Ken.
 "We're gaining fast," said Hudson.
 "But—"
 "But—"
 Ken watched, in doubt. The Dawn was overhauling the boat hand over fist. Desperately, almost madly, the three dagoes strained at the oars, their swarthy faces glaring back at the Dawn as they pulled, the sweat running down their dusky cheeks. But the ketch was swooping after them like an albatross. Their only chance was that they were now near the drifting schooner, and might reach it before the ketch, swift as it was, passed them in the race.
 Ken's face was fierce and eager. He would have been keen in any case, in a race for salvage; but the trick Giro had played on him made him doubly keen to beat the dago. He was hopeful, but he was in doubt as the Dawn rushed on, under her booming canvas, her sharp prow cleaving the Pacific rollers like a knife, a long white wake streaming behind her. She sailed at least ten fathoms to the whaleboat's one, fiercely as the dagoes strained at the oars, overhauling the swarthy trio faster and faster till at length a biscuit could have been tossed from the ketch to the whaleboat.
 One more minute, and the tall sails of the Dawn would have swept onward,

THE GREAT 'ARMAMENTS' RACE

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PRIZE NEWS! This week we start the third lap in our Giant Stamp-Collecting race! We still have Five More "Hercules" Bikes and at least 2,000 of the other grand prizes to give away in the July contest—all for collecting the free Armaments Stamps being printed in MODERN BOY every week. There are now five different kinds to be collected—BATTLESHIPS, TANKS, DESTROYERS, and so on. Cut them out and try to get as many others as you can—all those you have collected so far (except Bombers, Submarines and Searchlights, which have been called in) should be kept for this month's contest.

There are sixteen more stamps on this page! Add them to your collection right away, and don't forget that you will find more of these stamps to swell your total in other papers like "Magnet" and "Gem." Why not get your pals interested, too? You can then swap stamps with them!

At the end of July, we shall again ask you how many of one or more kinds of stamps you have collected. And then the remaining Five Bikes and at least 2,000 of the other prizes will be awarded to those readers with the biggest collections of stamps called for. All second-prize winners will be asked to choose their own gifts.

Don't send any stamps yet! We will tell you how and where when the time comes.

OVERSEAS READERS are in this great scheme also and special awards will be given for the best collections from overseas readers for whom there will be a special closing date.

(N.B.—You can also collect or swap Armaments Stamps with readers of—"Boy's Cinema," "Triumph," "Champion," "Magnet," "Gem," "Sports Budget," "Detective Weekly," and "Thriller"—stamps can be cut from all these papers, but no reader may win more than one first prize or share, of course.)

RULES.—Five First Prizes of £4 7s. 6d. "Hercules" Cycles and at least 2,000 other prizes will be awarded in order of merit as in previous months of the contest, i.e., to the readers declaring and sending the largest collections of the stamps called for. Cash value of any of the first prizes may be divided in case of a tie or ties for such prizes. Ties for any other prizes will be decided by the Editor.

All claims for prizes to be sent on the proper coupon (to be given later); no allowance made for any coupon or stamps mutilated or lost or delayed in the post or otherwise. No correspondence. No cuts connected with this paper may enter, and the Editor's decision will be final and legally binding throughout.



HURRICANE SALVAGE!

(Continued)

He staggered across to where the Italian's knife had fallen and picked it up. Then he tottered across to the companion. Three fierce, swarthy faces appeared in the sunlight on the deck above, looking down—knives were gleaming—the three were about to descend together. Pierce as a cornered tiger-shark, though he was almost sinking with pain and weakness, the Lukwe skipper, knife in hand, glared defiance.

"Come on, you scum!" he snarled. And, without waiting to be attacked, he made a movement to drag himself up the ladder. The door at the top of the companion steps slammed shut. Black Furley, overcome by his own desperate effort, reeled away from the ladder and sank down, his senses swimming, barely retaining consciousness enough to watch for the dagoes if they came.

"Stand by, Ken!" said Kit Hudson. King of the Islands stared at his shipmate.

"We're through here, Kit!" he said. "What do you mean?"

Koko had reached the whaleboat with a line, and now the Hiva-Oa boys were swinging it up to the davits. That was all that Ken had to delay for—and he was more than glad to have done with the dago crew. Giuseppe had won the race to the derelict, and Ken certainly had no thought of disputing his right.

But there were other thoughts in the mind of the mate of the Dawn. His eyes were fixed on the schooner, dark and grim suspicion in his look.

He had seen Giuseppe Giro scramble, panting and breathless, out of the companion, and the three of them gather there, staring down. Then they had shut the companion door. Ken, busy with the whaleboat, had not heeded what was going on on the deck of the derelict. But Hudson had seen—and he wondered, and suspected. Perhaps his irritation at having been taken in by the cunning dago made him prompt to suspicion. But suspicious he was.

"Black Furley's no friend of ours, Ken," he said, "but stand by, till we're sure that there's no one on that hooker. If we'd found a man on board, we'd have cried off the salvage and lent him a helping hand—do you think that crew would?"

"Hardly!" said Ken. "But there's no man aboard, Kit. I should not have reckoned Black Furley to be the man to desert his ship till she sank under his feet, but the boats are gone, the crew are gone—and Furley went with them. Why should he have kept out of sight if he was on board? He would have signalled us for help."

"Ay, ay—but—" Hudson shook his head. "There's something going on on that schooner, Ken. I don't know what, but I'd rather know, before we drop her. That greasy dago swab—"

Ken laughed. "You're shirty because he pulled our leg, old man! So am I, but it's his

salvage and we've no right to set foot on that hooker."

"I know! But if there's one chance in a hundred, Ken, that there's a living man on that packet, you know as well as I do that he won't live after we're no longer in the offing. I tell you, there's something fishy—that dago scuttled up from below like a frightened rat and they've shut the companion."

King of the Islands fixed his eyes on the drifting schooner. One of the dagoes had gone to the helm; all three were staring across at the Dawn, with intent eyes. Did that eager intendment mean that they were anxious to see the ketch glide away before the wind? Ken wondered—but Hudson did not wonder; he was sure.

"Stand by, if you like, Kit!" said King of the Islands at last.

On board the Grampus, the three dagoes held their breaths. At any time Black Furley might come rushing up on deck—and that was the last thing they wanted. Ill and bruised as he was, the tough trader was a match for the three men on deck. The native crew of the Dawn hung over the side—waiting to see what would happen.

And Giuseppe and his crew were watching, too, impatient to see the Dawn's sails fill to see her swoop away before the wind. But they watched in vain. The ketch lay hove-to, still in the offing.

Next Week: MYSTERY OF THE GRAMPUS

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